the welfare of the Ruling Family, as a result of which the Ruling Family prospered in every direction. I commend the motion for the acceptance of this House.

Mr. President : On behalf of the Chair I wish to associate myself with every word which the Hon'ble Minister has said regarding our deep sorrow on the lamented demise of Her Highness the late Valiamma Tampuran. I would now request the House to rise and pass the resolution standing.

The motion was passed nem con all members standing as a mark of respect to the deceased.

Announcement of the names of the Panel of Chairmen

Mr. President : I have to announce that Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar and Mr. A. B. Salem will constitute the Panel of Chairmen for this session.

SPEECH
BY
THE MINISTER FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. T. K. Nayar *(Minister for Rural Development) :*

Mr. President, Sir,

I have great pleasure to avail myself of this opportunity to address the House before the presentation of the budget and place before the Hon'ble Members some of the salient features of the administrative policy, so far pursued and proposed to be followed in future, in respect of the departments entrusted to my care. I hope this will form a proper basis for a correct appreciation and a healthy criticism of the budget during the course of the general discussion. I am deeply grateful to the Hon'ble President for agreeing to this innovation.

Considered in the order of importance, I shall deal with Panchayats first. I am a believer in the principle of granting more and more powers to the Panchayats, which alone will give them the proper incentive to do responsible and useful work in village administration. The very idea underlying the establishment of Panchayats is to train the villagers in local self-government. This is not possible unless adequate powers are given to them. An effective recognition of this principle is given in the budget for the coming year, in that every Panchayat will enjoy the right to prepare its own budget in respect of the original works within its jurisdiction. A sum of Rs. 52,009 has been set apart for this purpose. Half of this allotment has been divided in proportion to the area and the other half in proportion to the population of these Panchayats. It is entirely left to each Panchayat to determine the items of original works on which this allotment is to be spent. I fervently hope that this important reform, which has been effected in the Panchayat administration, will be worked out by every Panchayat with the sense of responsibility it deserves, so that this may be the correct fore-runner of further reforms calculated to enhance the powers and privileges of Panchayats in future. I am not unaware of the probable risks involved in a venture of this kind. There is no experiment without risks. I take this opportunity to appeal, through this House, to every Panchayatdar in the State to prove himself worthy of the trust placed in him and to realise that it is up to him to see that every pie of this allotment is spent in the very best interests of the general public. I may state, for the information of the House, that this experiment was tried on a minor scale in the year 1113, by placing a lump allotment of Rs. 150 at the disposal of each Panchayat. The successful working of that scheme for the last five years must necessarily lead us to a reasonable anticipation that, with proper direction and control, this experiment is bound to be successful.

It has been almost a standing grievance, given expression to by the various Panchayats as well as the Hon'ble Members of this House, that the Panchayat roads are not being properly maintained. I trust that the additional allotment of Rs. 10,000 provided for this purpose will go a long way to redress this grievance.

The working of the Panchayat courts has been subjected to severe criticisms both inside and outside this Council. With a view to consider the possibilities of reforming the present system, a committee was constituted during the time of my predecessor-in-office to go into the working of these courts and submit a report suggesting modes of improvement. The committee has submitted a valuable report to the Government and it is under consideration. The Government hope to introduce in this House a comprehensive Bill in the near future. Any suggestions which the Hon'ble Members may have to offer on the recommendations of the committee will receive the earnest consideration of the Government when drafting the Bill.

To those who have examined the real character of the constitutional reforms in Cochin, I need hardly explain that the extent of their beneficial results largely depends upon the finances at

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the disposal of the Minister. In the first session of this Council, the then Diwan, Sir Shanmukham Chetty, realising the importance of this aspect, promised to place a lakh of rupees annually at the disposal of the Minister for a period of three years. That period had come to a close by 1117. It would have been a singular misfortune to the ministerial port-folio if the arrangement had stopped with that period of three years. I naturally thought that I would be failing in my duty to the Cochin public if I did not invite the attention of the Diwan to this aspect, so that he might place more funds at my disposal for the working out of some of the schemes of public utility which I had in view. It gives me great pleasure now to inform the Hon'ble Members that the Diwan was pleased to allot Rs. 2 lakhs for the coming year. I take this opportunity to extend to him my sincere thanks.

In an agricultural State like Cochin, nothing is more important and urgent than the enhancement of the possibilities of cultivation. The appalling instances of constant failures of crops due to want of irrigational facilities have, to a large extent, been responsible for the feeling of despondency prevalent among the agricultural classes. Any scheme providing for the improvement of agriculture should, therefore, have its corner-stone in a proper solution of the irrigation problem in the State. I felt that the best way in which this Rs. 2 lakhs could be utilised was by allotting a major portion of it for irrigation purposes. Accordingly, a scheme has been prepared for improving the minor irrigation of the State costing a sum of Rs. 1,70,000, a scheme which, I hope, will enure to the permanent advantage of our ryots. When the scheme is fully worked out, it is expected to benefit about 12,000 acres of land leading to an increase in the yield by about 3 lakhs of *paras* of paddy. It is my firm conviction that I shall be receiving the hearty co-operation of every Hon'ble Member of this House for the successful working out of this proposal, and I can assure the House that every suggestion relating to this question will receive my most earnest attention.

I may refer, in this connection, to the Food Production Scheme that has been recently launched in the State. Even to a casual observer of the agricultural conditions prevailing here, the extensive areas of fallow land, owned both by the Government and by private landholders, have always been reminders of the unpleasant fact that all the resources of food production in the State have not been effectively and exhaustively tapped. The Hon'ble Members of this House have invited the attention of the Government to this question and requested them to place the *poramboke* lands at the disposal of the ryots for cultivation. The emergent conditions which have emanated as a result of the War have now made it necessary to lease out *poramboke* lands and forest exclusions for the purpose of food production at nominal rates of *pattom*. The vigorous drive given in this direction will, I believe, be appreciated by the public at large. Every possible encouragement is being given to ryots who take to cultivation of plots, which were hitherto lying fallow, by supplying them with seeds and, in some cases, by granting loans. I must express, in this connection, my deep sense of gratitude to the several Village Committees who have done substantial work for the success of this scheme, and I hope that they will feel the gratification to find that almost all their recommendations have been accepted. To further the benefits of this scheme by giving it sufficient publicity in villages, a propaganda tour was undertaken, which was successfully completed with the help of many of the non-official Members of this House who have done self-less work in this direction. The celebration of the Food Production Day throughout the State has also gone a long way in creating a lively interest among the villagers regarding this drive. I shall be failing in my duty if I omit to place on record my genuine appreciation of the very able and sincere work done by the Food Production Commissioner and his staff in this connection. I may also state that the unqualified co-operation and support which I have received from the Press, the public and the Government servants, including the Heads of Departments, have gone a long way in implementing the objects of the scheme.

As a result of this scheme, 8,813·71 acres of *porambokes*, 4,058 acres of reserved forest areas and 770 acres of leased portions of the reserved forests, totalling to an area of 13,641·71 acres of land, besides the vast areas of private land and the premises of public offices, have been newly brought under cultivation. It is, however, regrettable that, in spite of all the facilities and inducements granted by the Government, there are still a few landholders who have left their land uncultivated, and I once again appeal to their good sense, through this House, to realise the seriousness of the situation and take steps to cultivate their lands without further delay either directly or through lessees. Their failure to respond to this call will be a great dis-service to the general public.

While much has been done to promote extensive cultivation in the State, a good deal remains to be done by way of providing facilities for intensive cultivation. There are a large number of ryots who find it impossible, for financial reasons, to secure a supply of manure

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for application in their estates. A scheme has, therefore, been passed for starting manure depots in all the Panchayats from the beginning of next year, from which manure will be supplied to the farmers even on credit, on condition that the value will be repaid after the harvest. A sum of Rs. 43,500 under "Advances for manure" has been provided for this purpose, besides a special contribution of Rs. 6,225 for the supply of weights and measures to these depots. I hope that the agriculturists in all parts of the State will take the maximum advantage of the liberal facilities afforded by this scheme. The temporary remission of the occasional double crop assessment and the facilities given to the ryots in the shape of advances of seeds and manure will, I believe, be sufficient inducement not only to bring more and more lands under cultivation but also to convert the existing single crop lands into double crop lands and the dry into wet lands.

Another important problem which has been engaging the attention of the Government for a long time is the question of supplying good drinking water in the littoral tracts. The most effective method by which this problem can be effectively solved is by laying out pipes in these areas and supplying Alwaye water. But this is evidently out of the question at least for the present. An alternative proposal is to have tube wells, which cost much less than ordinary wells. Accordingly, 24 wells were constructed in these areas. Unfortunately, almost all of them were not in working order when I had occasion to inspect them recently. They have now been got repaired, and a mechanic has been appointed exclusively to look after these wells, as they occasionally go out of order. It is too early to say whether the experiment is successful or not. The working of these wells during the summer months has to be watched before a definite decision can be arrived at. A committee, which was appointed to go into this question and submit a report, had also remarked, in the course of their investigation, that a definite report could be submitted only after watching the working of these wells for some time. A sum of Rs. 5,000 has, however, been ear-marked for improving the water supply in these areas, and I may assure the House that all possible attempts are being made and will be made to solve this problem.

The amelioration of the social and economic conditions of the Depressed Classes has also engaged the attention of the Government. Steps have been taken to bring the 200 and odd acres of land in the colonies under cultivation and necessary amounts have been advanced for the purchase and supply of seeds. A sum of Rs. 2,750 has been set apart from the "special contribution" for the improvement of the existing wells and for the sinking of new ones. Timely steps were also taken to see that, as far as possible, the Depressed Classes, who had encroached on *poramboke* lands, were not evicted but that these lands were assigned to them.

Owing to the closure of the Burma market for the prawn export trade and the serious set-back the fishing industry had to suffer as a consequence, the Government sanctioned a remission of rent on fisheries to the extent of Rs. 13,395—6—3.

The rural midwifery service, which is of immense use to the villagers, is proposed to be further strengthened in the coming year and a sum of Rs. 2,000 has been provided for the purpose.

It is the intention of the Government to establish, in the long run, an Ayurvedic dispensary in every Panchayat and an Ayurvedic Hospital for each Taluk. Although, for reasons of finance, it has not been possible to implement this scheme to any appreciable extent, I assure the House that it will be seriously taken up as early as possible according to the availability of funds. The Government considered that it would be highly beneficial to the public if Ayurvedic medicines could be made available to them at comparatively cheap rates. During the last few years, sale of medicines from the R.V.C.A. Hospital used to be conducted on a moderate scale. The demand for medicines from the public had been very large. But the sales had to be restricted with due regard to the availability of medicines after meeting the requirements of the Central Hospital and the other Vaidyasalas. With the installation of machinery in the R.V.C.A. Hospital, which is now complete, it would be possible to manufacture medicines on a large scale so as to meet the requirements of the public to a considerable extent. The Government have, therefore, sanctioned the opening of a Sales Department in the R.V.C.A. Hospital.

A sum of Rs. 1,125 has been specially ear-marked in the budget for popularising the bee-keeping industry. It is proposed to reorganise this industry through village associations in every Panchayat area and to facilitate the sale of honey through the Central Co-operative Marketing Society.

There is a general feeling prevailing in the State that the co-operative movement is not thriving well here. A number of societies are in the course of liquidation and some are on the verge of liquidation while a few are working well. It is high time that an attempt is made to

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overhaul the whole department with a view to render the movement more successful and better based on practical notions. The Devadhar Report, which is, indeed, valuable in several respects, will serve as a broad guidance in this attempt. But it is possible that some of the recommendations in the report are unsuited to the conditions obtaining in our State. It is therefore, proposed to appoint a committee of persons who have experience and knowledge of the working of co-operative societies in this State to report on the possibilities of improving the movement. This will be done without much delay.

I may point out, for the information of the House, that the Government Trade Schools at Ernakulam and Trichur, which have hitherto been kept away from the purview of the Minister, have been transferred to my port-folio. It is, in a way, a necessary reform, in that it gives the Minister the control over all the institutions relating to the cottage industries in the State. A modest beginning has been made in the direction of improving cottage industries by allotting, in the budget for 1118, a sum of Rs. 5,000 for hand-spinning. Both from a national standpoint and from an economic standpoint under the present War conditions, it is my hope that this industry will enure to the advantage of an appreciable class of people in the State. The present proposal is to entrust the working of the scheme to the All-India Spinners' Association, a body which is well-known for its organising ability in connection with the spinning industry. If this experiment proves successful, the Government will consider the possibility of enhancing the allotments for similar ventures in future.

The Coir Depot in Cochin is another important industrial venture. As the House is aware, it was a losing concern. The reasons for this loss have been examined and some retrenchment in establishment charges has already been effected. A Managing Body of non-officials to supervise the working of this depot will also be appointed in the immediate future. This depot is intended mainly to be a Central Marketing Depot for the several industrial societies engaged in the production of coir. A proposal to open sub-depots in the several coir-producing centres is also under the consideration of the Government.

A modest experiment in paper manufacture has also been ordered to be tried, and a sum of Rs. 1,000 has been sanctioned to be advanced for the purchase of the necessary machinery for the purpose. This will be extended still further, if it proves to be successful.

I have so far attempted to place before the House some broad aspects relating to the administration of the Transferred Departments. Standing before you by virtue of a democratic principle, I owe my strength to the confidence which this House reposes in me and the co-operation it would extend to me in my endeavours. I am a believer in the value of healthy criticisms, and I can assure the Hon'ble Members that every such criticism will be regarded as a source of guidance by me.

We are passing through the most critical days in the history of the world. Not a single moment passes without innocent lives being lost: countries devastated and freedom of nations threatened. The most cherished of human ideals and culture are at stake. With the rapid march of events, what was hitherto a matter of news to us from abroad is fast becoming a reality in India, and the time is come for every responsible citizen of this country to preserve the honour and safety of this nation against a foreign aggression. I am glad to state that the National War Front Movement, recently launched in Cochin, as in other parts of India, to prepare the country for this sacred task, is receiving a warm and enthusiastic welcome from all sections of the public, irrespective of their caste, creed and politics. I count upon the valuable co-operation of every Hon'ble Member of this House to make this movement an unqualified success.

Announcement of Bill assented to by His Highness the Maharaja

Secretary to the Council: Under Standing Order 5 (2) I have to announce to the Council that His Highness the Maharaja has been pleased to give His Highness' gracious assent to the Cochin Port Roads' Control Bill passed by this Council.

Placing of statement of expenditure certified by the Government

Mr. P. V. Raphael *(Comptroller of Finance and Accounts)*: Sir, Under Rule 57 of the Legislative Council Rules, I beg to place the following statement of expenditure certified by the Government as essential under section 28 (*i*) (*b*) of the Government of Cochin Act.

S. No.	Head of Account	Amount Rs.	Remarks
1	37. Income-tax—Pay—Establishments—Temporary Establishment	676	Certified by the Diwan as essential for the efficient working of the Income-tax Department

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